



Media Release

## **Green Energy Act the Solution to Environmental and Economic Crises is theme of Manitoulin Island Workshop**

(M'Chigeeng ON., Feb 25, 2009)- Citizens from Manitoulin Island and surrounding areas attended a workshop at the M'Chigeeng First Nation Community Complex today, organized by the M'Chigeeng First Nation and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA). A presentation was made outlining what the Green Energy Act Alliance recommends be included in the Green Energy Act, which was tabled on February 23, 2009. Roger Peltier of Wikwemikong also gave a presentation on plans for a windfarm on the unceded reserve.

The theme of the afternoon was quickly established by the opening comments, "A Green Energy Act will bring economic prosperity and new 'green' jobs to Ontario, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and allow individuals, communities and companies to become energy producers and conservers," made by Roberto Garcia, Marketing & Membership Services Manager of OSEA., a founding member of the GEAA.

Renewable energy is the solution to both climate change and the economic crisis but to get enough windmills erected, solar panels installed and biodigesters operating, legislation is needed to make renewable energy a provincial priority.

Garcia went on to say, "The fundamental components we expect to see in Ontario's Green Energy Act flow from similar legislation adopted in Germany. That country is now a world leader able to produce 20,000 MW of new green power, developed in less time than it would take to build a 1,000 MW nuclear plant. Germany is also able to meet tough climate change targets by avoiding the emission of 100 million tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere a year, while a quarter of a million new green collar jobs have been created, all for just an extra \$5 a month per household.

These themes were repeated with expressions of concern about global warming by the young people in the audience and worry over rising energy bills by the older attendees.

To spur the rapid development of renewable energy, the GEAA is recommending guaranteed access to the electricity grid for all producers of sustainable energy, priority purchase of green electricity before coal and nuclear power, fair prices, fixed over the long term for renewables and a strong commitment to continually improve conservation and efficiency.

Across Ontario, farmers, First Nations and communities are eager to contribute to the province's electricity supply by producing clean, renewable energy. However, they are being hindered by outdated regulations that slow the adoption of renewable energy technology, a lack of access to the grid to sell their energy and opposition from lobbyists for the coal and nuclear power industry.

"M'Chigeeng First Nation has been waiting patiently for the province to recognize and confirm our participation in the renewable energy industry. The long awaited Green Energy Act will confirm the province's commitment to truly support this industry and further recognize First Nations as crucial players and partners. First Nation communities have current wind development projects ready to capitalize and can become leaders of small community projects within this industry. We look forward to the many economic and environmental benefits the province's Green Energy Act will provide," says Grant Taibossigai, manager of the M'Chigeeng MERE Wind Farm Project.

### **For more information, contact:**

Grant Taibossigai, manager of the M'Chigeeng MERE Wind Farm Project,  
705-377-5363, or email [ecdevgt@amtelecom.net](mailto:ecdevgt@amtelecom.net).

Roberto Garcia, Marketing & Membership Services Manager, OSEA, 416-801-6921

### **To request interviews, contact:**

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A schedule of all the GEAA workshops in this provincial series can be found at  
[http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476\\_Handout\\_v2\\_revised.pdf](http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476_Handout_v2_revised.pdf)

-30-

*OSEA works to initiate, facilitate and support the work of local sustainable energy organizations through membership services, province wide capacity building and non-partisan policy work. They work to catalyze the efforts of community organizers and raise awareness of the benefits of community power and renewable energy through various communication channels and by offering a variety of workshops and guidebooks on topics.*